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Traffic Court Report.—The first report of the Traffic Court of New York City has just been issued. The report covers that part of the year 1916, after June 14th, the date on which the court was established.

The Traffic Court is established in accordance with an amendment to the Inferior Courts Act of the City of New York permitting the establishment of special courts. This amendment was fathered by the Committee on Criminal Courts. The court has jurisdiction over violations of the State Highway Law, the Speed Ordinance and violation of other traffic ordinances and regulations.

There was an average of 53 cases per day in the 139 sessions that the court held. The total number of persons arraigned was 7,365. All were arraigned on summons excepting 225 who were summarily arrested and 15 who were brought in on warrants issued by the court, which shows clearly the value of the use of the summons. Six thousand four hundred and fifty-one, or 87.6 per cent, pleaded guilty. Of the 885 pleading not guilty, 216 were acquitted. Twenty-nine cases were pending December 31.

Ninety-seven per cent. of all arraigned were convicted. Sentence was suspended on 40 persons convicted, six-tenths of one per cent. of the entire number convicted. One hundred and seventeen were given prison sentences, the remainder comprising 97.7% of convictions, were fined.

The registration numbers of 4 owners of motor vehicles were suspended and the licences of 6 chauffeurs were revoked for operating motor vehicles while intoxicated. Of the 3,285 violations of the speed ordinance, 201 were second offenders and 24 were third offenders.

The court collected \$103,609 in fines. Six thousand nine hundred and seven persons were fined. Of this number, 6,128 paid their fines in court, 485 paid their fines after commitment, and 294 served sentences in default of payment of fines.

The report shows that the largest number of speed violations were on 5th Avenue and Riverside Drive.

In the appendix of the report will be found the laws and ordinances regulating speed and traffic of the City of New York. The report also gives the history of the speed ordinance. The court is presided over by City Magistrate Frederick B. House.—George E. Everson, New York City.

The Public Defender.—The growth of the Public Defender idea during the past few years throughout the United States is significant of the general awakening to the necessity of affording a "square deal" in the criminal courts to all classes of accused persons.

By legislative enactment or local provision, the office of Public Defender has been established in Los Angeles, Portland (Ore.), Omaha, Pittsburgh, Minneapolis, Norfolk, Atlanta, Hartford, Bridgeport, Columbus (O.), Houston, Evansville, Denver and Wilmington (N. C.).

Public Defender Bills are pending or will be introduced in numerous state legislatures, and vigorous movements supported by leading citizens have been launched in many of our large cities looking towards the creation of this new office.

In New York City, "The Voluntary Defenders' Committee," organized and financed by a group of public-spirited individuals, is furnishing paid counsel to indigents accused of crime. While this plan is fundamentally unsound, in that it substitutes charity for justice—and is a private instead of a public function—